



The Searchlight

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Violinist Mairead Hickey on Musical Consciousness

by David Stang

The story of Mairead Hickey is not unlike a fairytale. Introduced to the violin when she was just two-and-a-half, Mairead, a 23-year-old Irish woman currently residing in Paris, is now a celebrated musician. At the June 2018 West Cork International Chamber Music Festival in Bantry, Ireland, she was chosen to perform Zoltan Kodály's Duo for violin and cello, Opus 7, at the opening night concert with the Dutch cellist, Ella van Poucke. She has regularly performed in concert halls throughout Europe and at Carnegie Hall in New York. In April 2019 Mairead performed two All-Mozart concerts in Washington, D.C. And, she co-founded the annual Ortús Chamber Music Festival in Cork.

"I feel that although I am in control of my instrument that the music comes through me as if I were a vessel or conduit," Mairead responds when asked if she agrees with other musicians that music 'transports.' "When I am listening to music rather than performing it, I feel as though I've been taken to another world. When I'm playing music, I try to get my ego out of the way and let the music come through me in its purity, untainted." She explains that when she uses the term 'purity' in a musical context that compositions performed perfectly are true to the intent of their spiritual source. Her awareness of the spiritual component often found in classical music is revealed by her statement "When I hear the music of Bach, I sense that its essence is divine." Mairead's comments throughout her interview indicate that when performing at her best she is fully located in the present moment at the Aesthetic/Spiritual Interface, as appeared to be the case with all the musicians interviewed at the 1999 Chamber Music Festival in Bantry.

Mairead's father, Mick Hickey, himself a talented musician, was working in Bermuda as a mechanic when he met Clare Hatcher, an English solicitor, who was on holidays in Bermuda. Over the next three years, their

While living in Bermuda, Mick met with and became fascinated by the work of Jyrki Pietila, a Finnish violin teacher who taught young children in Bermuda how to play musical instruments using the Suzuki method. Jyrki served as Mairead's principal music teacher when she was between two and seven years of age, but her father worked with her nearly every day.

In 2003 Mick, Clare, Mairead and brother Seamus moved to Cork, the second largest city in Ireland.

Between the ages of seven and eighteen, Adrian Petcu, a Romanian music teacher, became Mairead's principal instructor. By this time, Mairead was performing publicly on the violin and earning many awards.

I recently had the opportunity to put some questions to this talented young woman.



Mairead, we discussed that Socrates and Plato had a vision of the Form of the Good, a place of perfection up in another realm above the earth. In their view what

transpired on the earth was a poor and tattered version of that celestial perfection. I got the impression that you sense that Mozart was plugged into the Form of the Good.

I think that Mozart's music is perfect. It is very pure, some of the purest music ever composed along with Johann Sebastian Bach's. Mozart's music is so full of genius at that it lacks any evidence of human frailty.

What happens to you when you are performing at your best?

First of all, I'm able to perform in my best only when I am fully prepared. And when I say fully prepared what I mean is that the technical aspects of performing the composition present no difficulties or distractions and I have become so familiar with that musical composition that it almost has become a part of

See INTERVIEW, page 6

Best Evidence

Who's Sarah?

When, in 1939, Charles J. Seymour, a British journalist, undertook an investigation of mediums, he expected to expose “the quackery” in the field. As it turned out, however, he discovered that there were genuine mediums and ended up writing about them rather than the fakes.

One of the more interesting cases discussed by Seymour in his 1949 book, *Behind the Seen*, involved a woman named Sarah. The first time it came through was on July 24, 1939 at a public sitting with a medium named Miller, who said a woman named Sarah was there for him. Seymour responded that he could not think of anyone named Sarah in the spirit world.

On August 3, 1939, he had a private sitting with medium Maude Bateman, who said, “I get for you the name Sarah.” On October 1, 1939, medium Eileen Blaschke said, “Sarah is here. She is helping you with your work, and I feel, has had a great influence on you for spiritual matters all your life.”

At a public meeting on June 9, 1940, Grace Cooke said, “I have a message from Sarah. She tells me that she has been close to you and has watched your progress all your life and has noted with great satisfaction the efforts you have made. She had no children of her own, but her wish was that she could have had a boy. This is a very beautiful spirit, and she sends you a great deal of affection.”

The skeptic will ask why Sarah simply didn't give her last name or her exact relationship with Seymour. However, anyone familiar with the subject knows that names are difficult to get for most mediums as they rely on symbolic pictures for names and many surnames do not have easily pictured names. On the other hand, most experienced mediums have recognizable symbols for more common first names.

“Sarah comes to greet you,” said a Miss Herbert at public meeting on December 22, 1940. “She has a beautiful face; very fine eyes.”

“Sarah sends her love to you,” said medium Ethel Moss at a Sunday service on January 12, 1941. She is a very sweet young person with blue-grey eyes.”

More than two years later, on May 11, 1943, in a private sitting, Mary Burge said, “A Sarah, who says ‘They used to call me Sally...’ A good soul...in spirit a long time.”

Still, Seymour shook his head. The name Sally meant nothing to him either.

“A Sarah for you, a very sweet lady,” said Eveline Canon at a public meeting on May 13, 1943.

“Sarah is very much in your environment. You get ‘hunches’ with her help,” said Olive Rutherford at a Sunday service on June 5, 1943.

At a public meeting on February 19, 1944, Gertrude Rayner provided Seymour with a series of names, all of which he recognized except for Sarah and one other.

Sometime during 1943, Seymour had a sitting with the famous direct-voice medium Leslie Flint, but his record of that sitting were destroyed when a bomb fell near his home and did some damage to part of it, including the records from that sitting. As Seymour recalled it, however, it was a group sitting and the first voice to speak said, “I am Sarah,” first very softly, then more audibly. Seymour remained silent and no one else in the room claimed the name. Flint's control, “Mickey” then spoke and said, “This is for the man by the fireplace.” As Seymour was sitting by the fireplace, he said that he accepted the name. The woman's voice in spirit then said, “I used to be called Sally. I have been with you many years, doing my best to help you.” Seymour replied that he did not know a Sarah or a Sally. The voice then responded: “You would not know me, dear. I am your great aunt, on your mother's side.”

Seymour now had a connection, but everybody on that side of his family had passed on and he had no easy way of confirming the actual existence of this great aunt. But at a sitting with Rose Harley on February 24, 1944, the names Sarah and Alice were given. Harley said that Sarah was in spirit, but she wasn't sure about Alice. Seymour recognized the name Alice as one of his mother's sisters, but he had not heard from her in many years and assumed that she also had passed on. About two weeks later, a cousin informed him that their Aunt Alice was still alive and in her 80s. Seymour then contacted her and was told that she and Seymour's mother had an aunt named Sarah, who had died at about age 17.

—MET

President's Message

About twenty years ago I began to notice a change in movies that confirms my own studies in the evolution of consciousness and spirituality. These new types of movies represent manifestations or artistic expressions of our collective deep-rooted feelings and subconscious awareness of our own evolutionary path to evolve higher levels of human consciousness and spirituality, more-or-less our own higher consciousness expressing itself through movies rather than other written and artistic forms. There have always been movies, just like written stories and books, that deal with various aspects of human consciousness. Take for instance *The Celestine Prophecy* (2006, about a new spirituality), *Sixth Sense* (1999, about communication with the dead), *Dragonfly* (2002, about NDEs, synchronicity and communication), *Field of Dreams* (1989, about the afterlife), and my favorite *What Dreams May Come* (1998).



What Dreams May Come is a story by about a doctor who dies and goes to heaven, not a religious heaven but a place of his own subconscious design and rescues his wife from her self-imposed hell for having committed suicide. The original novel was written by Richard Matheson after he studied different opinions from religious scholars, mediums, parapsychologists, scientists and philosophers on the afterlife, so he could present his readers with the best view of what a true afterlife would be like. But this new genre of movies tends to go even further and predict the evolutionary principle or nature of consciousness which tells us that the human species is presently moving toward the emergence of a new higher-level collective human consciousness marked by a more comprehensive higher spirituality.

The Matrix, with two sequels within the next few years, began this trend in 1999. This trilogy told the story of the emergence of a machine AI that took over the world and suppressed the humans. It used humans as batteries to support its own future evolution, while humans dreamed away their lives in 'the matrix', a computer driven false reality designed to keep enslave us. This only ended when a new form of human consciousness emerged in a person called Neo. Neo's new higher consciousness allowed to him to manipulate the AI created computer 'matrix' program, but also the real physical world itself where a small group of

surviving free humans lived deep within the earth in Zion, as well as travel at will between the two realities. This allowed Neo to end the war between the machines and freed humans in Zion, but it also implied a new era in which humans would develop their new higher consciousness along with the AI machines.

The Matrix movies ushered in a new era of movies combining modern mythologies with SciFi stories, enhanced by advanced computer graphics, speculations about the near future of humanity and the view that human consciousness will soon undergo a new evolutionary leap to deal with present and coming problems. Since then, whole new imaginary worlds based on these ideas have emerged. We have The Potter universe where muggles are slowly evolving into magic folk; the DC comic universe where meta-humans with special powers fight evil to save our world and others; the Marvel universe where human evolutionary and scientific advances have brought humanity into a greater competition with a wider and more comprehensive universe of diverse beings; the *X-Men* movies where mutants battle to allow conscious evolution at continue; the *Divergent* series where an undescribed holocaust has wiped out humanity and a group of surviving humans are used in a grand experiment to evolve a new human consciousness which is expected to save what is left of our world; and many more similar story lines.

There are also many individual stand-alone movies based on similar evolutionary themes: *Transcendence* (2014), *Interstellar* (2014), *Inception* (2010), *Glass* (2019), *Lucy* (2014), *Source Code* (2011), *Replicas* (2018), and *Self/less* (2015), to mention only a few. My overall favorite that leads to and explains both spiritual enlightenment and higher consciousness themselves in a way that even children can understand is *Kung Fu Panda* (2008, 2011, 216). Po the panda becomes 'the dragon warrior' and begins his journey to develop his 'kung fu', a first step in evolution of consciousness. He then learns of and develops 'inner peace' and finally he becomes a 'Chi Master'. All of these are only steps on Po's own path (Tao) to spiritual and consciousness enlightenment, which he only begins to realize when he visits the 'spirit world' in the third movie. More movies are supposed to be in the works, and I eagerly await them hoping to enlighten myself. These are animated movies, but they work for everybody of all ages, especially children. All of these movies are available for purchase new in Walmart and other movie outlets, used or new on the internet, or they can be stream downloaded from different the internet services.

— James E. Beichler, PhD



Searchlight Media Watch



by Tom and Lisa Butler, NST

Japanese Demon Festival: OGA, Japan (Reuters) - As a child, Tatsuo Sato was terrified when the Namahage demons roared into his northern Japanese house every year, but in adulthood he mourned as the centuries-old tradition faded away. “The kids disappeared; the young people disappeared. We had to give it up,” Sato, 78, said of the New Year’s Eve visits by men in horned masks and straw capes, all shouting “Are there any bad kids here?”



UNESCO’s registering Namahage as a cultural property late last year has given new life to the colorful tradition. Local officials hope the long-sought UNESCO designation stirs a tourism-based economic boost badly needed in places like Oga, a remote peninsula some 450 kilometers north of Tokyo, and the Masukawa district where Sato lives. Economically, the attention has already helped. The Oga city’s Namahage Sedo festival, held in early February, drew 7,600 people, compared with 6,100 in 2018. The festival, in which a parade of torch-bearing demons makes its way down a snow-covered mountain, swells Oga’s population by nearly 30 percent as tourists pour in, hoping straw from the demons’ capes - believed to be lucky - will fall near them during the smoky procession.

From: Lies, Elaine. “Japanese ‘demon’ festival grapples with blessing and curse of UNESCO listing.” Reuters. 2019. [reuters.com/article/us-japan-festival/japanese-demon-festival-grapples-with-blessing-and-curse-of-unesco-listing-idUSKCN1QM2R3](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-festival/japanese-demon-festival-grapples-with-blessing-and-curse-of-unesco-listing-idUSKCN1QM2R3).

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Spiritualism Growing in the UK: The Spiritualists’ National Union of Great Britain estimates that they have around 11,500 members throughout the UK attending their 340 churches to try to communicate with the spirit world via mediums, a number which, they claim, has been bolstered by a surge in interest from younger generations. The number of people in England and Wales who identified their religion as censuses.

From: Spratt, Vicky. “Meet the young people who

believe they’re communicating with the dead.” BBC. 2019. [bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/eabdc0ed-70c0-4af2-8295-96ebfc4dc613](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/eabdc0ed-70c0-4af2-8295-96ebfc4dc613)

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Belief in Psychics: Many Americans hold what are sometimes characterized as “New Age” beliefs. These beliefs are most often in reincarnation, astrology, psychics and the presence of spiritual energy in nature like mountains or trees. A recent survey by the Pew Research Center found that 62 percent of Americans believe in at least one of four spiritual concepts identified as “New Age.” Specifically, 41 percent believe in psychics and that spiritual energy can be found in physical objects, while somewhat smaller shares express belief in reincarnation (33%) and astrology (29%).



From: Held, Lisa. “Psychic Mediums Are the New Wellness Coaches.” The New York Times. 2019. [nytimes.com/2019/03/19/style/wellness-mediums.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/19/style/wellness-mediums.html).

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Death Expo: At Quebec’s first death expo last year, attendees could test out a coffin in the “rest area.” Notaries and funeral homes set up booths, along with artists who created jewelry from a loved one’s ashes and others in the industry. The expo attempted to break taboo’s regarding death and offer advice and information on a subject that is rarely discussed.

From: Leavitt, Sarah. “Quebec’s 1st-ever death expo attempts to break taboo, offer comfort in afterlife.” CBC-Radio Canada. 2018. [bc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-first-ever-death-expo-1.4890859](https://www.bcc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-first-ever-death-expo-1.4890859)

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Death and Art: One of the most popular genres in painting is the still life. Its origins go back to ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome. It became a popular art form in Europe by the 1600s. The idea was to paint a posed selection



of domestic items that took on symbolic meanings, many related to death. Skulls, dead animals and timepieces reminded the viewer that life was transient. And as beautiful as fruits and

flowers are, they have limited time before they decay.

From: Holahan, Jane. "Arts help illuminate our understanding of mortality." LNP Lancaster Online. 2019. lancasteronline.com/features/arts-help-illuminate-our-understanding-of-mortality/article_c8acd59e-684f-11e9-ab77-4f4a17ac3f20.html

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Is Meditation the Habit Your Brain Needs? In the 1980s, chronic pain was one of the first conditions that mindfulness meditation was used to treat, and some researchers have found evidence in brain scans that it influences the emotional suffering associated with pain if not the physical sensation of pain itself. Since then, emerging evidence has suggested that mindfulness meditation may also strengthen the part of your brain involved in learning, attention, memory, emotion regulation, and perspective taking—and may even delay aging. In one recent study, researchers at the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine, examined an associate who had undergone an intensive one-month insight meditation retreat and found improved telomere regulation, which is associated with cellular aging and may play a role in linking psychological stress to disease.

From: Health, Elysium. "The Complete Guide to the Science of Meditation." Endpoints. 2018. endpoints.elysiumhealth.com/the-science-of-meditation-1442df86a5fb

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Low-dose Lithium may help prevent Alzheimer's, calm chronic irritability and anger, ease depression and prevent suicide. This is surprising, because lithium is considered a serious drug for psychiatric conditions like bipolar disorder and is given to patients in high doses of 150 mg to 1,800 mg. However, we are now being told that in very low doses (1 mg to 5 mg), lithium is a nutritional treatment, uniquely effective for a range of problems.

Studies have shown low-dose lithium helps treat Alzheimer's and lowers the risk for Alzheimer's. Low dose has been shown to improve sleep and ease agitation and psychosis. Lithium may be an effective way to combat the rise in suicide. Research done around the world has found that the lower the levels of lithium in the water and soil (it's a naturally occurring trace element), the higher the rate of suicide. A study published in Journal of Psychiatric Research compared the suicide rate in 226 Texas counties with 3,123 lithium samples from the public water supply. Finding: Lower suicide rates were linked to higher

lithium levels in the water. Research done in Lithuania and published in Journal of Trace Elements in Medicine and Biology found the same was true for men and suggested that lithium may decrease suicide risk, which is two to four times higher among men than women.

From: Staff: Source- James Greenblatt, MD. "Lithium: Not Just for Bipolar Disorder." BottomLineInc. 2019. bottomlineinc.com/health/medications/lithium-not-just-for-bipolar-disorder

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We are Happier When We Give: Researchers conducted two studies. In one, participants were given \$5 every day for five days and were required to spend the money on the same thing each day. Some participants were required to spend the money on themselves, while others were required to give to someone else (like leaving money in a tip jar or donating to charity).

In a second experiment that was done online, participants played 10 rounds of a word puzzle game and each won 5 cents per round, which they could keep or donate. In both experiments, participants reported their overall happiness. Those who donated their money showed that their happiness declined at a much slower rate than those who kept the money or spent it on themselves.



From: Conley, Ellie. "New study shows gift giving will result in longer happiness than receiving." AOL. 2018. aol.com/article/lifestyle/2018/12/25/new-study-shows-gift-giving-will-result-in-longer-happiness-than-receiving/23626449/

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New Members

Bob Brame,
Paul Keane,
Rose Etheridge

Donations

Bill Wilson



INTERVIEW

From page 1

me. That means that I understand the music so fully that I know that I have the ability to express its message through my violin. Because there are at the time no other distractions, I can be fully open and receptive to the music. When this happens, I feel fully present and that each note that I am playing is all that matters. I'm not thinking about the future, nor the past. It is only the absolute present moment that I am experiencing. I feel almost as if compelled by magic to tell the story the composer intended when he wrote down the notes I am playing.

It is said that music is a language unto itself and it needs no words because the notes themselves are doing the talking. Do you agree with that?

I feel that good music well performed can be understood by anyone. One doesn't need a Ph.D. in musicology to perceive the musical message contained within most musical compositions. Music can speak to everyone of all ages and from all walks of life. The message of great pieces of music composed several centuries ago contain the same message when presently heard as was comprehended by musical audiences many, many years ago who heard the composition performed for the first time. The people of Mozart's era who listened to his musical compositions while he was still living discerned from those compositions the same message or feeling that person's experience in present-day times when they hear Mozart's music being performed. In other words, today's listeners of Mozart's music I believe experience the same emotional connection to that music that listeners of Mozart's day experienced.

What made you dedicate yourself so diligently to prepare yourself to become a full-time professional musician performing classical music?

I just love music and classical music is profoundly deep. So, immersing myself daily in the profundity of classical music is enormously uplifting to me. These days the world seems so full of stress, conflict and craziness. I believe the best solution to this horrible

situation is more music, more art, more beauty and very definitely more love.

How much work is involved to succeed as a full-time professional musician?



It takes a lot of discipline. You have to practice for many hours every day. And most of the time alone. A lot of the time you spend practicing is focused on learning technique. For example, playing in tune; being in control of the instrument; experimenting with vibrato and bowing techniques in order to create different sounds that suit the character of the passage you are performing. It takes a lot of time to analyze a musical score and form a clear idea of how to convey what you believe the composer had in mind. Or simply to convey your

understanding of the music you are preparing to perform. The world of classical music performance is highly competitive. To achieve your goal, you have to remember daily that music is what you love more than anything else and that performing music is so very fulfilling as an offset to self-doubt and allowing oneself to fall victim to severe stress. Music itself is not a competition, but an art form and you have to discipline yourself to remember that otherwise the stress of constant preparation can sometimes be demoralizing.

Although the compositions of all of the great composers contain within them the full range of human emotions, it would appear that the compositions of each composer tend to suggest a uniqueness that is recognizable. Similarly, one can learn to discern the music of one composer from another. In this context what comes to mind when you think of the music of various composers?

Well, to generalize a bit, when I hear the music of Bach, I sense that its essence is divine. When I think of the music of Beethoven, I think of triumphantly coming to grips and overcoming ever present human strife. When I think of Mozart, I sense his music is untaintedly pure in form and filled with love. When I think of the music of Franz Schubert, I get the feeling of love that is coupled to sadness.

Why are you so attracted to chamber music?

I was very lucky to have played in a quartet from the age of 10 and it was one of the first times I realized how much fun it was to perform classical music with other people. What I really love about performing chamber music is the concert performance is a unique combination of different musical ideas and different personalities who together perform a unique interpretation of that particular musical composition. In an ideal group all of the musicians support each other and inspire each other. The number of persons in a group can vary from 2 through 9 or 10 musicians. Each performer has his or her own part to play and at the same time is listening to what the other musicians are performing and in the process each musician adapts themselves to the music they hear being performed by the other musicians in the group. Through this process a magnificent intimacy evolves between and among all of the performers in the group. As a result of this intimacy the musicians are able to more effectively convey to the listening audience the beauty of the musical composition they are performing. That is one reason why it is such a joy to be able to be on stage with other chamber musicians and collectively express our interpretation of the compositions we are performing.

You were a child prodigy. How would you characterize what it is like to reach adulthood by beginning your maturation process as a child prodigy?

I don't like to think of myself as being a child prodigy or somebody special because any other person, given the right circumstances, could learn how to play a musical instrument as a very young child. So instead of claiming to be a child prodigy let me just tell you what it was like for me to grow up having begun my musical career at age two- and-a-half learning how to play a violin. To begin with, I was always very lucky to have fantastic violin teachers, to have parents who supported me and encouraged me to practice every day. Many people who heard me performing on my little violin told me that I had special gifts, but those people had no idea that my skill in playing a musical instrument was the direct result of spending many, many hours practicing, taking a lot of music lessons and being given advice and encouragement by my teachers and parents. To tell you the truth, as a child I got very annoyed when people told me I had special gifts. I hated being singled out as somebody different from the other children. When people told me that I was somebody special because of my abilities that would make me cry. But by the time I had become a teenager I had made a lot of friends with other people as interested in performing music as I. When I was in public school, I found it so boring that I was drawn to practicing music even more diligently because it gave me something to do that I really loved. I believe that if I maintained my diligence in practicing music I wouldn't end up as boring an adult as some of my teachers. But that was not the only reason: rather I learned early on that if I really wanted to become a

professional musician, by the time I grew up I had to practice very hard every day.

The Power of Music to Transport

The paper I presented at a 2000 symposium in Ireland on The Aesthetic/Spiritual Interface was entitled "What Happens to Musicians When They Are Performing at Their Best." It was based upon my interviews with more than two-dozen world-class professional chamber musicians who had performed at the internationally acclaimed West Cork Chamber Music Festival held during the summer of 1999. One of its lead musicians, who performed annually at the festival in the town of Bantry and who was also a participant in that symposium, was Gregory Ellis, the first violinist of Ireland's Vanbrugh String Quartet. Routinely, professional musicians report that prior to performing at their best they first need to have mastered and integrated the composition they are performing

"Things become much easier," Ellis detailed what happens when he is performing at his best. "The technicalities seem to be resolved. They have obviously been worked on during lots of practice, and when you've got into 'the zone' or whatever they call it, and you are playing at your best, the technicalities no longer become an issue at all. Things start to feel very easy, and when the music is great you start to get very much in tune with the meaning of the music. You feel as though you are being played through – that the music is playing you in a sense. It is so powerfully transformative that it makes time seem to stand still – in the sense that you are not aware of the past or the future. So, in that sense, there is only one time, and that is the present. I think it is fairly clear that when you are totally present in the here and now your sense of time has changed. It can vary between an absolute pin-point of time to being a vast space in which you have stepped completely out of time." What better example than Ellis's to indicate 'the power of music to transport.' He also indicated that the elevated feeling of performing at one's best cannot be compelled or willed. It just happens, as if facilitated by Divine Grace.

The common threads, I found, from the 1999 interviews with those world-class musicians were: among those What follows represents the common threads of the phenomenological descriptions presented during the interviews conducted at the 1999 Chamber Music Festival of more than two dozen world-class chamber music musicians. These virtuoso performers revealed the mind states and heart states they experienced when performing at their best:

- Feeling relaxed, contented, joyful, free, happy, playful, creative, 'in the zone', ecstatic;
- Being completely in the present moment, transported by the music beyond time, beyond place, beyond self;
- Sensing oneself in total control, while paradoxically surrendering control – in effortless concentration
- Feeling of power to perform at exceptional levels of spontaneous creativity;
- Sensing that one is a conduit for the music; that the music comes through, or is playing, the musician – as if under the influence, as one musician stated, of the universal muse; Feeling at one with the audience and that the music, the composer, the musicians and the audience are all simultaneously connected with one another having the same sacred experience.

– David Stang

Guest Editorial

The Object of Life

by Sir Oliver Lodge, D.Sc.

The attempt to explain consciousness materialistically has been conspicuously futile, but yet conscience is one of our immediate apprehensions, and that fact alone shows that more there is something more in the universe than matter and energy.

Consciousness seems to be a personal assurance of mind, and mind seems to be the blossom of fruit and life, and it is only by reason of the observed actions of our fellows that we infer in them an intelligence akin to our own.

When we detect rational arrangement under a complete system of law and order in the inorganic world – the world of atoms, planets, and suns – when we perceive the laws of mind and spirit are valid throughout the whole extent of the universe, most of us are led to postulate the existence of some great mind which governs and understands it all.

The old creeds and formularies are not permanent, because our modes of expression change. Science is fluid, and you cannot stereotype it. Never throw away hastily any old faith, tradition, or convention. They may require modification, but they are the result of the experience of many generations.

Our problems do not get easier as the world grows older, but now the majesty of the universe as conceivable by the human mind, is overwhelming. We are but a speck in a vast creation full of law and order, in which, in the depths of space, the same laws hold as here, showing it is the work of one mind. Modern science gives to human life an incredible future, so that our blunders and squabbles show us as naughty children in the nursery.

Materialism has been scotched, but not killed. There is a truth in the facts of materialism, though these facts have been wrongfully interpreted. The doctrine of evolution has extended from biology to astronomy. The birth and death of worlds is going on before our eyes. The universe is a going concern. The reign of law and order is complete.

The truth is that we are souls which have a body. The soul has made the body which is a mere instrument. The only existence we know in life is association with matter on this particular planet, but it is quite unlikely that that is the only kind of existence possible. Science is gradually making us aware that real existence is a much wider and more universal thing. Life and mind are by no means limited to our earthly manifestations.

It is only through limitations of our senses that

anyone could have been led to such a mistaken conception as that life can only exist in intimate connection with particles and atoms. I believe space to be full of animation of life and mind which lives in matter for a little while and then goes back to space.

My difficulty is how life got into matter. In due time, the dust, the particles, will return to earth and the spirit go back to God, who gave it. That sums up the matter in literal truth.

We are beginning to change our views about matter. We perceive that it is not the most important thing even in the material universe... The only excuse for our having thought that life and mind are necessarily associated with matter is because until recently we had not known them to be associated with anything else.

To the question ‘what is the object of life?’, the answer is beginning to appear. It is to form a character which shall continue, and which shall be worth living with, to realize the intrinsic value of life and existence, and to train ourselves by meeting difficulties and obstacles not to be defeated by pain and trouble.

Troubles we must have, but, like the struggle for existence, they may be all to the good. Among the lower animals the struggle for existence improved the species; the struggle towards knowledge and higher powers may improve the individual.

We have reached a stage at which we can realize that pain and trouble and effort are worthwhile. Our privilege is to explore with patience and diligence the vast extent of the universe to the thread of simplicity, amid its marvelous intricacy to apprehend glories beyond the utmost stretch of our imagination, and therefore to revel in the enjoyment of its infinite beauty.

The above is an abridged version of a talk given by Sir Oliver Lodge in Glasgow on September 9, 1928. Knighted in 1902 for his scientific work, Lodge was known primarily as a physicist, especially for his work in electricity, thermo-electricity, and thermal conductivity. He perfected a radio wave detector known as a “coherer” and was the first person to transmit a radio signal, a year before Marconi. He later developed the Lodge spark plug. He served as president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1913 and as president for the Society for Psychical Research from 1901 to 1903 and again in 1932. This is drawn primarily from the November 1928 issue of “Psychic Research,” the journal of The American Society for Psychical Research.



The Miracle Club: How Thoughts Become Reality, by Mitch Horowitz, Inner Traditions, Bear & Company, Rochester, VT, 2018, 173 pages.

Horowitz's purpose in writing this book was to "bring a new tone of maturity to the most popular (and disparaged) of all philosophies: Positive or New Thought." The Title is borrowed from esoteric seekers who formed a group in New York City in 1875 to study the mystery of miracles (circumstances unexplained by normal expectations or laws of nature). Threaded throughout the book is: "Thoughts are causation." This is an attempt to prove metaphysics works and to offer a challenge to the reader to follow his instructions and evaluate the results for themselves. Validating his findings, Horowitz describes the fascinating work of many authors, researchers, physicists, theologians, mystics, etc. who have performed studies or had personal experiences.

Writer-in-residence at the New York Public Library, Horowitz has authored a number of other books, including *Occult America*, *Awakened Mind*, *The Power of the Master Mind*, and *Thinking Your Way to Health*. He believes there is very little differences between metaphysical and mental experiences. Cognitive and extra physical complement one another to produce what are called synchronicity coincidences. Often these occur mysteriously. However, Horowitz contends that, by the power of our minds, we can expand the ordinary boundaries of our minds and our personal experiences.

This can be seen in the placebo effects, or to reach a goal that seemed impossible as well as in positive thinking. In addition, the author encourages the use of our connection to God "the seen and the unseen." It is possible that within the brain field there is a domain in which the thought and thought of others are plugged into a creative force outside our usual observation. Quoting Emerson, "Satisfaction in our lot is not consistent with the intention of God and with our nature. It is our nature to aim at change, improvement and perfection." Horowitz sites Neville Goddard's philosophy that the creative force traditionally called God solely exists within, as your imagination....."as you think, plan, and fall in and out of emotional states, but you are asleep to it." It is constantly out-picturing mental images and emotional charged thoughts.

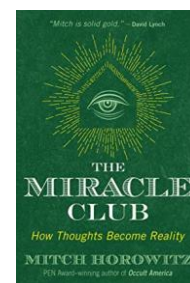
In his chapter "Methods in Mind Power," Horowitz describes how to balance the well-known positive mind techniques such as affirmation, visualization, meditation and prayer. Researchers have found that the hypnagogic state – the moments just before sleep and just as awaking

– is the opportune time to focus the mind's attention on your goals/needs especially visualizing your goals as already accomplished. Of major importance is doing this with deeply felt emotional conviction which he says is the "building block to belief and the key to influencing the subconscious." Emile Coue's (1857-1926) advice was to recite his well-known phrase, "Every day in every way I am getting better and better." while in the hypnagogic state. This between awake and asleep may benefit our prayer time as Horowitz pines "New thought teaches affirmative prayer which means holding a thought or visual image, asking a Higher Power in deepest confidence to fulfill your need and believing it is done." Yet he cautions that there is no wrong way to pray as long as you use the language of your heart." To move us on this trajectory. Horowitz proposes a method in which we can use our innate extra physical abilities by the following formula:

"First clarify a sincere and deeply felt desire. Second, enter a state of relaxed immobility, bordering on sleep. Third, enact a mental scene that contains the assumption and feeling of your wish fulfilled. Run the little drama over and over in your mind until you experience a sense of fulfillment. Then resume your life. Evidence of your achievement will unfold at the right moment in your outer experience."

Throughout this book, the author urges us to experiment with New Thought. He invites us to empty ourselves of things that we've heard. "Self-agency exists as a sacred yearning... asking you to grow. If you deny it, you will waste years of searching for God which is the direction in which the sacred exists." The book ends with recommendations for this experiment: Dissociate from destructive people; Use every means to improve your mental acuity; Strengthen your body; Seek no one's approval; Learn some form of meditation; Pursue excellence in what your attempt; Do this by being consistent and with determination. "New Thought values and methods will shine the way for each seeker, whatever his values or circumstances, to shape his life-and the world-in accordance with his highest self."

I found this book to be affirming and positive, but I can imagine the reader, upon trying the author's methods, and when the hoped-for result is not forthcoming, it magnifies his/her feeling of being a failure. Also, I am surprised by his use of only the male pronoun.



– Glenda Hawley, Ph.D.

In Childhood and Their Lifelong Impact,

by P.M.H. Atwater, L.H.D., Bear & Company,
Rochester, VT, 2019, 232 pages

This book, the author states, is a departure in near-death experience (NDE) research. Its focus has been “to examine the phenomenon from every possible angle, to let the very youngest speak – no matter their present age – and compare that with my previous study done in the nineties.” She explains that the earlier book, *The New Children and Near-Death Experiences*, involved 277 children with experiences that occurred between the womb and fifteen years of age. “With this newest project, I’ve gone after ‘the long view’ once they had fully matured – what was it like while young with Mom and Dad, siblings, friends, school, dating, sex, growing up, jobs, marriage, handling money, spirituality religion, personal views.” There were 120 experiencers involved in the newer study.

The author of sixteen or more books, including *Dying to Know You*, *Future Memory*, *Beyond the Indigo Children*, *We Live Forever*, and *A Manual for Developing Humans*, Atwater entered the NDE research field after three near-death experiences of her own within three months during 1977.

“Child experiencers of near-death states are not like adult experiencers,” Atwater writes. “Most cannot compare ‘before’ with ‘after’ as adults do because they don’t have a ‘before’ – at least not in this world. She points out that the largest cluster of cases was between three to five years of age, and drowning was the major cause of death/near-death, followed by birth complications. Not all cases, however, were trauma-induced. Case 24, for example, involved a girl named Vicky who recalled being able to leave her body and fly around the room, the only trigger being her father’s smiling face and his tickling her under her chin. “It made me laugh so hard I would fly up through the top of my head and out of my body. From the ceiling I’d look back at my little body on the couch and my dad sitting there laughing at me...I could see the whole house while soaring around, and then suddenly swoop down back into my body.” She goes on to explain that when she was out of body, she was older and much more knowledgeable, but when she returned to her baby body, she forgot the other aspect of herself.

Some memories are suppressed. Neil A., the subject of Case 59, told Atwater that the memory dating back to his sixth week of life did not come to him until he was 12, and it clearly came as a memory, not a dream. He had been diagnosed with Pyloric

Stenosis, a condition involving much vomiting, and his memory was that of seeing his parents in a very distressed situation surrounded by people. He remembered seeing his

mother sobbing, after which he found himself in a clear open space too beautiful for words. He heard wonderful music and was in the company of others who knew him and assured him that everything would be alright. “I began to communicate with other beings – no words – but we were speaking. Not in English but a language I somehow understood.”

Atwater notes that NDE research strongly suggests that NDE kids tend to lead “charmed lives” afterward,

including “an extended range of intuitive perception that seems to aid them in understanding life’s difficulties.” Most of the 120 cases in her newer study displayed psychic abilities. Seventy-five percent scored at the genius threshold or higher; 74 percent were suicide prone; 67 percent had sleeping problems; 62 percent said out-of-body experiences were common. Deborah W. (Case 48) states that she developed two lives, one intellectual with her family, the other intuitive with angels, involving parallel realities and parallel worlds. Jan (Case 7) says she sees, feels and remembers things most people don’t.

Strangely, many of the child experiencer lose most or all of their bonding with parents. “Instead of Mom and Dad, they bond to any of the various beings of love and light who exist on the other side of death’s curtain,” Atwater explains, adding that siblings can seem like strangers to them and that while love for their parents can still exist, it is no longer primary.

Atwater states that counselors, therapists and psychologists need to rethink before attempting to help clients who have had NDEs when very young and she notes that some psychiatrists have made “the leap” to a more holistic approach. Clearly, our mental health experts still have much to learn in understanding and treating those who have had near-death experiences, and this book should be part of their education.

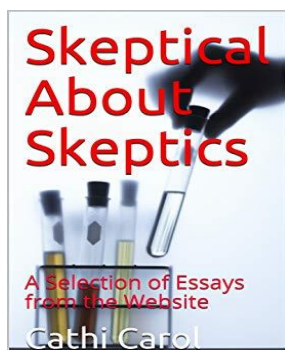


– Michael Tymn

Skeptical About Skeptics, by Cathi Carol,
Transpersonal Paradigm Publishing, 2018,
318 pages (available on Kindle only)

According to a prevailing premise since earliest This book should be required reading in all Philosophy 101 classes. It's a book I'd like to give to all my pseudo-skeptical friends and all the pretend debunkers I come across on the Internet. The only problem is that very few of them would read it. They'd turn up their self-righteous noses and toss it aside after just a few pages as they are too grounded in scientific fundamentalism to see any truth in it.

The book is anthology of essays by various scientists, philosophers and journalists, including Academy advisory council members Drs. Larry Dossey, Stanley Krippner, and Charles Tart, on, as the title indicates, skepticism. "Dogmatic materialist pseudo-skeptics are illogical, irrational, backwards thinkers, so terrified of the reality of mind that they are unwilling to trust even their own experiences of mind, or to believe any scientist, explorer, or curious observer who has confronted their fear of the self-evident and moved forward into the idealist implications of cutting-edge modern science and of even greater empirical knowledge, thereby becoming unafraid of the truth," editor Cathi Carol sums it up in the Epilogue. "In truth, there is nothing to fear."



Rupert Sheldrake, the renowned British biologist, comments that he used to think of skepticism as a primary intellectual virtue, but he has changed his mind and now sees it as a weapon. The goal of skepticism, he says, is not the discovery of truth, but the exposure of other people's errors.

Dean Radin, Chief Scientist at the Institute of Noetic Sciences, points out that most of the skeptical arguments against *psi* are extreme views and that the effect of seeing skeptical dismissals of parapsychological research in college textbooks and in prominent scientific journals, has diminished mainstream academic interest in the topic.

Winner of the Nobel Prize in physics in 1973, Professor Brian D. Josephson notes that in his attempt to promote proper discussion of "cold fusion" in 2002, he attempted to upload a survey and review at a particular website, but the moderators deleted the material,

declaring it "inappropriate." "The overall situation seems profoundly unsatisfactory," he states. "The system built up over the years to promote scientific advance has become one that narrow-minded people can use to block any advance that they deem unacceptable."

Professor Janice Holden, who has done extensive research with the near-death experience, discusses the failure of the peer-review system. She explains how a scientist, researcher, or theorist writes a paper for a journal, but that it is then dismissed by two or more reviewers who are unaware of the scope of research carried out with the NDE.

Gary Schwartz, professor of psychology, medicine, neurology, psychiatry and surgery at University of Arizona, discusses, what he calls, "Truth Abuse," which includes selective editing of mediumistic readings to make them look like they have failed or to suggest that experimenter was sloppy in his analysis and interpretation of the data.

As philosophy professor Neal Grossman sees it, although the fundamentalists of religion and the fundamentalists of science are on opposite extremes of the spectrum of possible attitudes towards an afterlife, they are united "as strange bedfellows in their battles against the possibility that there are matters of fact about the afterlife that empirical research might discover." Grossman concludes that the scientific fundamentalism is a result of (1) resistance to paradigm change; (2) intellectual arrogance; and (3) social taboo. Grossman suggests that acceptance of the findings of NDE researchers would mark the end of a culture based on greed and ambition and which is measured in terms of material possession, wealth, reputation and social status. Thus, there is a vested interest in undermining near-death research by ignoring, debunking, and otherwise marginalizing the research.

Former Academy VP Nancy Zingrone, a research psychologist, argues that critics often present themselves as worldly-wise, objective, scientific, and unable to be fooled, thereby intimidating many from telling their spiritual experiences and further discouraging research. "One does not often hear from the mouths of TV critics any consciousness of the impact of their quick and sometimes thoughtless commentary," she adds.

Daniel Drasin, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, offers what to me was one of the more interesting essays. "At best, debunkers will occasionally expose other people's errors; but for the most part they purvey their own brand of pseudo-science, fall prey to their own superstitions and gullibility, and contribute little to the actual advancement of knowledge," he writes, pointing out that many of their debunking strategies have been adapted nearly verbatim from historical writings by debunkers.

Other contributors include Ralph Abraham, Stephen Braude, Etzel Cardena, Ted Dace, Robert McLuhan, Graham Nicholls, Guy Lyon Playfair, Stephan Schwartz, and Alex Tsakiris.

“The exclusion of mind, intent, and will from their accepted, approved dogma, the materialist belief system, causes them to struggle mightily to try to explain anything at all, and they fail at all explanation eventually,” concludes editor Carol. “[a]ll they are able to come up with is ‘It just happens’.”

– *Michael Tymn*

* * *

The War for Islam, by Stafford Betty,
Roundfire Books, UK, 2019, 232 pages

This novel begins in 2090. France has become 45% Muslim and Belgium 95%. While Muslims account for 19% of the American population, 50% of Michigan is Muslim and 45% of Maine. In Detroit, where sharia law is administered, a gallows was erected behind second base at Hakim Hamza Stadium, where the Tigers play, for weekly executions of drug dealers, murderers, and even thieves. As author Betty explains it, “execution was a spectacle that many young men preferred to NASCAR, where speeding cars driven by real humans provided the entertainment. Death was far more certain at the Double H.” Death from violence has become so common worldwide that it is no longer as terrifying as it had been decades earlier.

A long-time member of the Academy, Betty has authored a number of books relating to spirituality and afterlife studies. As a professor of religious studies at California State University, Bakersfield, he takes a somewhat unorthodox, bold, and refreshing approach in teaching his classes, discussing mediumship, near-death experiences, past-life studies, death-bed visions, and other psychic phenomena. It is clear from the beginning that this book is not intended to fuel the fears of those afflicted with Islamophobia; rather, Betty’s aim is to instill an appreciation of the non-radical side of Islam.

While the vast majority of Muslims condemn the worldwide terrorism carried out by the Caliphate, the ultra-radical Muslims, few of them take to the streets to protest against them, at least until Silas Wyatt, the protagonist in this story, and his classmate, Layla Haddad, a Muslim woman of Egyptian origin, organize a march in Manhattan.

In his doctoral dissertation, Silas, a Christian (more-or-less Catholic), lays out the road to peace between Islam and the rest of the world. His views are based more on the hereafter that has come from psychical research rather than religion. The evidence from this research is further set forth in a

book published by a small press in Great Britain. The problem is that the research suggests that Muslims, Christians, Jews, and other are all going to experience the same kind of afterlife, no preferences being given for the religion they subscribed to while on earth. That doesn’t sit well with the fundamentalists of the various religions and further upsets the faculty at New York University, where Silas teaches, as they are primarily secular and regard the afterlife as the stuff of fairy tales. Nevertheless, the New York Times is impressed enough with Silas’s writings that they hire him as a syndicated columnist.

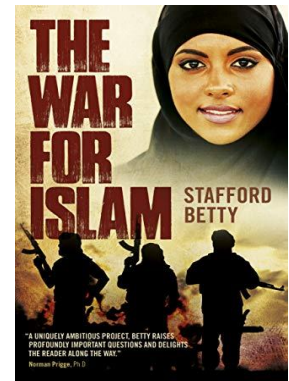
Meanwhile Silas struggles to choose between his two Muslim girlfriends, Layla and Saira, both of whom resist him because of the religion conflict. While Layla and Saira are fairly liberal in their Islamic views, neither can bring herself to being married to a Christian, no matter that he has no problem accepting their religions.

By the twenty-second century, Japan and Australia are the only major countries not significantly affected by Muslim migration and influence. In 2109,

Silas has the opportunity to interview the Prime Minister of Japan. In prefacing his questions to the prime minister, he says that from what he had observed, Japan is the world’s only First World country – no litter, no graffiti, no potholes in the roads, no slums, no violent crime. Moreover, he is unable to reconcile the notion that Japan is one of the least religious countries in the world with the fact that he had witnessed many people bowing reverently as they entered sacred spaces. Prime Minister Toshihiro Shima explains the three ways that his country is able to maintain such quality, one of them being an aggressive propaganda ministry.

As an independent, Silas becomes mayor of New York City in 2122, defeating Justin Perez, backed by many Christians, and Suleiman Ahmadi, aligned with Islam. In his campaign speech, Silas promises to introduce legislation that would require a basic knowledge of the world’s nine largest religions as a high school graduation requirement. He appeals to the secularists by telling them that the God he believes in is not the God of orthodox religions.

Following a bombing of Khadijah Center, previously known as Trump Tower and now a gathering place for New York’s Muslims, by the



Caliphate, in 2125, non-Muslims realize more than ever that there are two Islams, “and that ‘the good one’ is their friend and ally against a common enemy.”

Does the world survive the Caliphate, secularism, and what remains of Christian fundamentalism in 2125?

Since many people prefer not to know what’s ahead, I dare not add to this review of the book

beyond saying that the characters really come alive and there are surprising resolutions. The book provides profound insights into the major cultural problem of our time and is more than just a novel. Although I’m not about to join any religion, Silas, Saira, and Layla certainly helped me better appreciate Islam.

– *Michael Tymn*

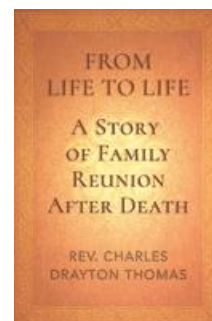
From Life to Life: A Story of a Family Reunion After Death, by Charles Drayton Thomas, White Crow Books, UK, 2019, 140 pages

This is a reproduction of a 1945 book involving an aristocratic English family living through the later Victorian period and into the Edwardian years. The happiness surrounding the family was dealt a serious blow when young Edgar was killed in fighting around Vimy Ridge in 1917. “The very brightness of their previous outlook made the future appear more desolate by its sharp contrast,” author Thomas wrote. “For William (Edgar’s father), there were ruined hopes buried in that grave on foreign soil; for the aunts (Agnes and Helen) came a [void] which nothing they could picture would ever fill. To all three of them, the future years must bring limitations of body and possibly of mind; but the arm on which they had expected to lean and the keen young brain which would have thought and planned for them, and which might have enlivened those later years...Edgar...was dead....The home took on a changed atmosphere. Depression and resignation reigned unchallenged in each. Edgar was gone.”

Thomas, a Wesleyan minister and a dedicated psychical researcher while representing the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), draws from the journals of Agnes, which she maintained until her death in 1942. Her notes are based primarily on twice a year sitting she had over more than two decades with renowned trance medium Gladys Osborne Leonard, who had been studied extensively by Thomas, but also by automatic writing which she developed at some point. Also, a member of the SPR, Agnes had been urged by physicist Sir Oliver Lodge to sit anonymously with Mrs. Leonard.

At the very first sitting with Leonard, Edgar told Agnes and Helen about a secret compartment in his pocketbook, which had been returned to them by war department, that contained small pieces of paper with notes on them. Upon returning home, they found the notes. Other evidential information was provided, as well as “lifelike characteristics and traits of individuality” associated with Edgar. “Formerly I had *believed*, but now I *knew*! Agnes recorded. “Knowledge was added to faith, leaving faith free for further activity and higher flights.”

As William held the Christian belief in heaven, he was shocked when his sisters reported that they had talked with Edgar through Mrs. Leonard. However, some evidential communication eventually brought conviction to him before he, too, transitioned and began communicating with his sisters through Leonard. In one communication he told Agnes that he found things there much different than he had imagined. “One could hardly believe at first that it was real,” he communicated. “It is a happy life and more full of interest and opportunity than I am able to explain to you.” He further told her that “[o]ne cannot overestimate the value of knowing before one passes.” The majority, he added, were not prepared for life in the spirit world.



Edgar explained to Agnes that many do not accept the world beyond death because they will have to face the results of willfulness and selfishness during their earth life and that a person’s body (aura?) shows the degree of spiritual development. “The more one lives in harmony with the Divine Mind, the more fully and perfectly does one live here.”

When William first sat with Leonard, he noted what seemed to be side talks between Edgar and Feda, Leonard’s spirit control. Feda would be saying something through the entranced Leonard when Edgar would interrupt (also through Leonard’s voice mechanism) and tell her that she did not get it correctly. William could picture his son’s impatience at the errors and his determination to get Feda to communicate more accurately. The interplay between Edgar and Feda, he said, was lifelike. In one exchange, Feda said, “It is interesting,” but Edgar corrected her, saying that it was “*interesting*.”

Feda commented that Edgar “keeps on about a thing until it is cleared up, when others might have dropped it.” Thomas noted that these comments were especially illuminating and explained in part why some sitters obtain little and others get much more. “I found that these people in the Beyond differed in ability to

overcome difficulties just as do people on earth. Some were capable, others were not, and most were betwixt and between.”

After Helen transitioned, she struggled to communicate, but finally succeeded, saying that “[i]t is quite easy after all. Dear me! How easy it all is – how easy dying is – and waking – to find Edgar and so many you cared for waiting for you – and looking just like themselves – only some of them younger and all of them looking happier.”

As Agnes approached her own transition, Edgar informed her that her real self, in her spiritual body, would emerge and slowly assume full form, standing completely outside her physical body. He and other loved one would then take her to her home and rest a day or two until the etheric cord uniting her to the earthly body is broken. “Many seem to sleep longer,” he continued, “but as your faculties are so alert, I expect you will assert yourself quickly.”

– *Michael Tymn*

THE SOURCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF COINCIDENCES (a hard look at the astonishing evidence) 2019, by Sharon Hewitt Rawlette, PhD. 618 pages. Available on Amazon.

Ms. Rawlette has put together an exceptional compilation of coincidences detailed in hundreds of books and articles published over the past hundred years plus. Most importantly, she has segregated them in two primary categories: first, the source of the coincidences, and second, their significance.

In addition to the published instances, Ms. Rawlette also includes many of her personal coincidences as meaningful examples. The sources consist of ten major categories: *e.g.* Chance; God; Angels & Guides; etc. One extraordinary group consists of The Yet-to-Born. It provides an extraordinary look into what occurs in the spirit world in preparation for developing into human form. Lots of planning occurs to determine what each spirit will do in its human development. It’s not just simply choosing the most helpful pair of parents. If you don’t believe in reincarnation, you’ll have second thoughts after reading this section.

In her introduction she states: “Many of the cases I’m interested in involve physical events that appear to reflect the contents of people’s minds. The idea is that something seems to be happening that is outside the “normal” mind-to-mind sorts of communication that feature in telepathy and after-death communication, as well as outside blatant cases of psychokinesis—where someone announces their intention to mentally bend a spoon, for example, and the spoon proceeds to bend. In the coincidence cases I am interested in studying, the physical world appears to be involved in an unexpected and particularly enigmatic way in conveying personal meaning.”

One of the most common sources of coincidences is God and Angels. You may not be aware of it, but we all have spirit guides: sometimes only two and sometimes more. Some guides may also be Angels. I’ve been personally told by a very gifted psychic that I am surrounded by fourteen spirit guides (I must need a lot of help) and twelve of them are Angels. Angels also have a

sense of humor, as was demonstrated to me personally this past week while at work. I was driving in lane one of an auto auction, and a friend drew up beside me in lane two and told me to turn off my damn radio. My car radio wasn’t on, until I drove about ten feet further and it came on by itself in a big blast of noise. It was my angel’s way of letting me know I’m being watched. It happened in the midst of my reading the section about Angels and Guides.

Ms. Rawlette also makes a very important point about sources: “...our individual human minds are actually parts of a larger consciousness – perhaps the “mind of the universe” – which communicates with us through the medium of coincidence.” She also presents the possibility that consciousness may be multi-level – the lowest level could be as little as the atom level and grows from there to surround everything that exists.

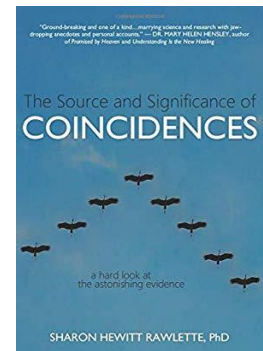
The second half of this book concentrates on the impact of our coincidences (usually positive):

“confirming decisions; providing protection; locating important information; giving material help; bringing together two people who love each other (or will); keeping us on the path of our destiny; and promoting our spiritual growth.”

The last chapter deals with the most difficult significance – interpreting dreams. As she states: “...I think that the character trait most vital for dealing profitably with coincidences is a tolerance for mystery. Mystery is the humbling and tantalizing quality of a universe that far outstrips our most assiduous attempts to reduce it to our mode of understanding. With coincidences, as with so many areas of life, we often think we know more than we do and are tempted to explain when we ought to explore.”

Generally speaking, coincidences give us an awareness of aspects of ourselves and provide advancing our spiritual understanding of the world.

– *Paul J. Hauser, J.D.*



Has Science Ignored the Life Principle?

Has Science completely missed the boat in exploring life's greatest mystery? I'm referring to what may very well be a "life principle" that permeates and connects all things. Based on experiments carried out with "sensitives" during the early 1840s, German chemist Baron Karl von Reichenbach called it *odic force*, or just *od* or *odyle*. It has been likened to the *prana* of the ancient Hindus, the *vis medicatrix naturae* of Hippocrates, the *mana* of Polynesian culture, the *chi* of the Chinese, the *astral light* of the Kabbalists, the *telesma* of Hermes Trismegistus, the *magnetic fluid* of Mesmer, and it has been suggested that it is the *soul mist* observed by many leaving the body at the time of death.

"Under the term odyle, I collect and unite all the physical phenomena...which cannot be brought under [heat, electricity or magnetism], and also the *vis occulta*, which produces them," Reichenbach's German words were translated. Most of Reichenbach's peers dismissed his findings as absurd, more superstition than science, making no attempt to replicate his research. Several decades later, a number of esteemed men of science reported on a substance called teleplasm, or ectoplasm. It ranged from a vaporish mist to a thick milky-looking liquid, depending on the medium, and indications are that it was just another name for odyle.

Professor Charles Richet, the 1913 Nobel Prize winner in medicine, and Dr. Gustave Geley, a laureate of the French medical faculty at the University of Lyons, studied a number of mediums and observed ectoplasm on countless occasions. Richet explained that the ectoplasm exuded by the medium known as Eva C. usually came from her mouth but at other times from the top of her head, from her nipples and the ends of her fingers, and was initially invisible. "Then one observes a whitish steam taking the shape of gauze or muslin, in which a hand or arm develops, gains consistency, then moves," he wrote. "Sometimes they show no relief, looking more like flat images than bodies, so that in spite of oneself one is inclined to imagine some fraud, since what appears seems to be the materialization of a semblance, and not of a being. But in some cases, the materialization is perfect."

Geley stressed that the experiments with Eva C. were carried out under strict controls, including complete body searches, and were observable under red light. "I

do not say merely, 'There was no trickery,' I say, 'There was no possibility of trickery,'" Geley stated. "Nearly all the materializations took place under my own eyes, and I have observed the whole of their genesis and development."

The very hokey nature of most of the materializations, as seen in various photographs, lend themselves to fraud, until one asks him- or herself why a charlatan would think that such bizarre manifestations, especially those that appear like cardboard cutouts of dolls or cartoon characters, would fool anybody. However, as Richet and Geley came to understand it, the fact that nearly all the forms and objects produced by or through Eva were crude, rudimentary, fragmentary,

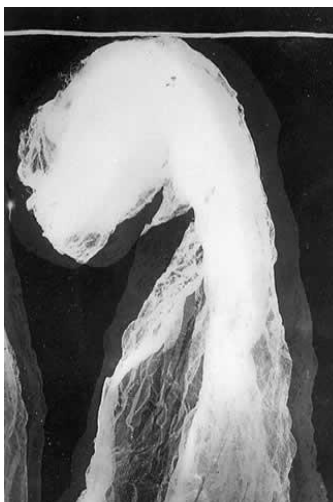
amorphous or defective in one way or another did not suggest fraud.

Geley's more detailed explanation and those of other researchers accepting the spirit hypothesis seem to suggest that while the "entities" or spirits were attempting to project images into the ectoplasm by thought, their ability to do so was limited by the power of the mediums, by the power of those sitting with the mediums, and by the creative abilities of the spirits. The latter, referred to as an ideoplastic process, has been likened to asking a human to draw a picture of him- or herself. A few will look like the person, but most will resemble cartoon characters or scarecrows. Indications are that only a few mediums were strong enough to produce full materializations, and only on "good" days.

"I shall not waste time in stating the absurdities, almost the impossibilities, from a psycho-physiological point of view, of this phenomenon," Richet wrote of the many materializations he witnessed, with Eva, Eusapia Palladino, Franek Kluski and other mediums. "A living being, or living matter, formed under our eyes, which has its proper warmth, apparently a circulation of blood, and a physiological respiration, which has also a kind of psychic personality, having a will distinct from the will of the medium, in a word, a new human being! This is surely the climax of marvels! *Nevertheless, it is a fact.*"

Yet, nearly a century after Richet wrote those words, Science still knows nothing about the odic force and even denies that such a thing exists.

— Mike Tymn



Ectoplasmic figure



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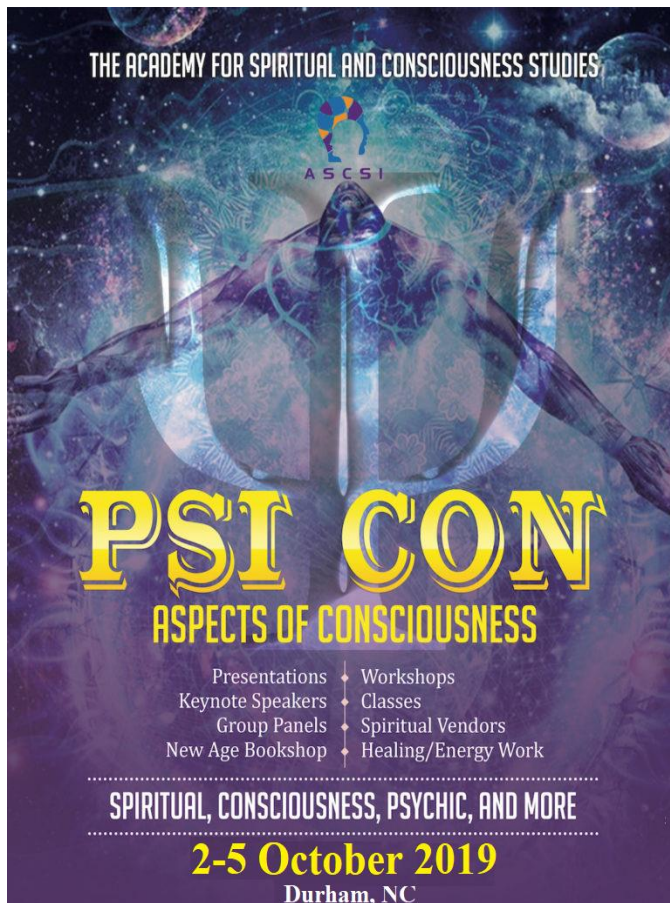
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16

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